UPON THE

RISE and PROGRESS

OF

CRITICISM.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

CRITICISM.

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THOSE, who can imagine that the Rules of Writing were firſt eſtabliſhed, and that then men wrote in conformity to them, as they make conſerves and comfits by referring to receipt-books, know nothing of Criticiſm, either as to its origin or progreſs. The truth is, they were Authors, who made the firſt good Critics, and not Critics, who made the firſt good Authors, however writers of later date may have profited by the precepts of critical diſquiſitions.

If this appear ſtrange, we may refer to other ſubjects. Can we doubt that there was Muſic, ſuch indeed as it was, before the principles of harmony were eſtabliſhed into a Science? — that diſeaſes were

healed, and buildings erected, before Medicine and Architecture were ſyſtematized into Arts? — that men reaſoned and harangued upon matters of practice and ſpeculation, long before there were profeſt teachers either of Logic or of Rhetoric? To return therefore to our ſubject, the riſe and progreſs of Criticiſm.

Antient GREECE in its happy days was the ſeat of Liberty, of Sciences, and of Arts. In this fair region, fertile of wit, the *Epic* Writers came firſt; then the *Lyric*; and laſtly the *Tragic*, the *Comic*, the *Hiſtorians*, and the *Orators*, each in their turns delighting whole multitudes, and commanding the attention and admiration of all. Now, when wiſe and thinking men, the ſubtle inveſtigators of principles and cauſes, obſerved the wonderful effect of theſe works upon the human mind, they were prompted to inquire *whence this ſhould proceed*; for that it ſhould happen *merely from Chance*, they could not well believe. Here therefore we have the RISE and ORIGIN of CRITICISM, which in its beginning was "a

"deep

" deep and philoſophical Search into the " primary Laws and Elements of good " Writing, as far as they could be col- " lected from the moſt approved Perfor- " mances."

In this contemplation of Authors, the firſt Critics not only attended to the Powers, and different Species of WORDS; the Force of *numerous compoſition* whether in proſe or verſe; the Aptitude of *its various kinds to different ſubjects*; but they farther conſider'd that, which is the baſis of all, that is to ſay in other words, the MEANING or the SENSE. This led them at once into the moſt curious of ſubjects; the nature of *Man* in general; *the different characters of men*, as they differ in rank or age; our *Reaſon* and *Paſſions*; how the one was to be perſuaded, and the others raiſed or calmed; the *Places* or *Repoſitories*, to which we may recur, when we want proper matter for any of theſe purpoſes; *Sentiments* and *Manners*; what conſtitutes a Work, *one*; what, a *Whole* and *Parts*; what the eſſence of juſt, and even true *Fiction*, as oppoſed to that, which is improbable, and out of nature.

Much of this kind may be found in different parts of PLATO. But ARISTOTLE his Diſciple, who may be called the Syſtematizer of his Maſter's Doctrines, has in his two Treatiſes of *Poetry* and *Rhetoric*, with ſuch wonderful conciſeneſs, penetration, and order, exhauſted the ſubject, of which we are ſpeaking, that he may be juſtly called THE FATHER OF CRITICISM, as well from the age when he lived, as from his truly great and tranſcendent genius. The *Criticiſm*, which this divine man taught, has ſo intimate a correſpondence and alliance with *Philoſophy*, that it may be truly called, PHILOSOPHICAL CRITICISM.

To *Ariſtotle* ſucceeded his Diſciple *Theophraſtus*, who followed his maſter's example in the ſtudy of Criticiſm, as may be ſeen in the liſt of his writings, preſerved by *Diogenes Laertius*. But all the critical works of *Theophraſtus*, as well as of many others, are now loſt. The principal authors of this kind now remaining in *Greek*, after *Ariſtotle*, are, *Demetrius* of *Phalera*, *Dionyſius* of *Halicarnaſſus*,

Dionyſius Longinus, together with *Hermogenes*, *Apthonius*, and a few others.

Of theſe the moſt maſterly ſeems to be *Demetrius*, who was the earlieſt, and who appears to follow the Precepts, and even the Text of *Ariſtotle*, with far greater attention, than any of the reſt. His Examples, it muſt be confeſſed, are ſometimes obſcure, but that we may rather impute to the deſtructive hand of time, which has prevented us the ſight of the original authors.

Dionyſius of *Halicarnaſſus*, the next in order, may be ſaid to dwell almoſt wholly upon the force of *numerous Compoſition*, meddling little with the ſublimer, and more eſſential ſources of good writing, becauſe perhaps his genius did not aſpire ſo high. *Longinus*, who was in time far later than theſe, ſeems principally to have had in view the *Paſſions*, and the *Imagination*, in which he has acquitted himſelf with a juſt applauſe, and written with a dignity ſuitable to the ſubject. The reſt of the *Greek Critics*, tho' they have ſaid many good things, have yet ſo

 minutely

minutely multiplied the rules of Art, and ſo far confined themſelves to the oratory of the Tribunal, that they appear not of much uſe, as to good writing in general.

Among the ROMANS, the firſt Critic of any note was CICERO, who, though far below *Ariſtotle* in depth of philoſophy, may be ſaid, like him, to have exceeded all his countrymen. As his celebrated Treatiſe *concerning the Orator* is written in dialogue, where the ſpeakers introduced are the greateſt men of his nation, we have incidentally an elegant ſample of thoſe manners, and that politeneſs, which were peculiar to the leading characters during the *Roman* Commonwealth. There we may ſee the behaviour of free and accompliſhed men before, before court-adulation had ſet that ſtandard, which has been falſly taken for good-breeding ever ſince.

Next to *Cicero* came *Horace*, who often in *other* parts of his writings acts the *Critic* and Scholar, but whoſe *Art of Poetry* is a ſtandard of its kind, and too well known to need any encomium. After

Horace

Horace aroſe *Quintilian*, *Cicero*'s admirer, and follower, who appears by his works not only learned and ingenious, but (what is ſtill more) an honeſt and worthy man. He likewiſe dwells too much upon the *forenſic* Oratory, a fact not to be admired, when we conſider the age in which he lived; an age, when tyrannic Government being the faſhion of the times, that *nobler Species of Eloquence*, I mean the *popular*, and *deliberative*, was with all things truly liberal, degenerated and ſunk. The latter *Latin* Rhetoricians there is no need to mention, as they no way illuſtrate the ſubject in hand. I would only repeat that the ſpecies of Criticiſm here mentioned, as far at leaſt as handled by the more able Maſters, is that which we denominate CRITICISM PHILOSOPHICAL. We are now to proceed to another ſpecies.

As to the *Criticiſm* already treated, we find it not confined to any one particular Author, but containing general Rules of Art, either for judging or writing, confirmed by the example not of one Author, but of many. But we know

from

from experience that in proceſs of time both Languages, Cuſtoms, Manners, Laws, Governments, and Religions inſenſibly alter. The *Macedonian* Tyranny, after the fatal battle of *Chæronea*, wrought much of this change in *Greece*; and the *Roman* Tyranny, after the fatal battle of *Pharſalia*, carried it throughout the known world. Hence therefore of *things* obſolete the *names* became obſolete alſo; and authors, who in their own age were intelligible and eaſy, in future days grew difficult and obſcure. Here then we may behold *the riſe of a ſecond race of Critics*, the tribe of *Scholiaſts*, *Commentators*, and *Explainers*.

Theſe neceſſarily attached themſelves to particular authors. *Ariſtarchus*, *Didymus*, *Euſtathius*, and many others beſtowed their labours upon *Homer*; *Proclus*, and *Tzetzes* upon *Heſiod*; *Calliergus* upon *Theocritus*; *Donatus* upon *Terence*; *Servius* upon *Virgil*; *Acron* and *Porphyry* upon *Horace*, and ſo with reſpect to others, as well Philoſophers, as Orators. To theſe Scholiaſts may be added the ſeveral Compoſers

poſers of Lexicons; ſuch as *Heſychius*, *Philoxenus*, *Suidas*, &c. alſo the Writers upon Grammar, ſuch as *Apollonius*, *Priſcian*, *Soſipater Chariſius*, &c. Now all theſe pains-taking men, conſidered together, may be ſaid to have completed another ſpecies of Criticiſm, a ſpecies which in diſtinction to the former, we may call CRITICISM HISTORICAL.

And thus things continued in a kind of ſickning way, till the extinction of the *Latin* empire, and the depravity of the *Greek*, when both Authors and their Scholiaſts were alike forgot, and an Age ſucceeded of Legends and Cruſades.

At length, after a long and barbarous period, when the Miſts of Monkery began to diſperſe, and the Lights of Humanity once again to dawn, the Arts alſo of CRITICISM inſenſibly revived. 'Tis true indeed the Authors of THE PHILOSOPHICAL SORT (I mean that which reſpects the cauſes and principles of good writing) were not many in number. However of this rank among the *Italians* was *Vida*; among the *French* were *Rapin*, *Bouhours*, *Boileau*,

Boileau, together with *Boſſu*, the moſt methodic and accurate of them all. In our own Country our Nobility may be ſaid to have diſtinguiſhed themſelves; *Lord Roſcommon* in his Eſſay upon tranſlated Verſe; *the Duke of Buckingham* in his Eſſay on Poetry; *Lord Shafteſbury* in his Characteriſtics thro' every part, but particularly in that admirable tract, *The Advice to an Author*. To theſe may be added Mr. *Pope*, in his elegant Poem, *the Eſſay upon Criticiſm*; and Mr. *Addiſon* in many of his valuable and polite *Spectators*, thoſe eſpecially, that are beſtowed upon the *Paradiſe Loſt*.

But however ſmall the number might be found of theſe, the writers of HISTORICAL or EXPLANATORY CRITICISM were in a manner innumerable. To name only a few——of *Italy* among others were *Beroaldus*, *Ficinus*, *Victorius* and *Robertellus*; of the higher and lower *Germany* were *Eraſmus*, *Sylburgius*, *Sturmius*, and *Torrentius*; of *France* were *Lambin*, *Du Vall*, *Harduin*, *Capperonerius*; of *England* were *Stanley* (editor of *Æſchylus*) *Gataker*,

Davis, Clarke, Hutchinſon; together with multitudes more from every region and quarter,

Thick as autumnal leaves, that ſtrow the brooks
In Vallombroſa ——

Nor muſt we forget the many copious and valuable *Lexicons*; the *Latin* and *Greek Theſauri* of *Charles* and *Henry Stevens*; *Favorinus, Conſtantine*, and the Commentary of *Budæus*. To theſe alſo we may add the Authors upon *Grammar*; in which ſubject the learned *Greeks*, when they quitted the Eaſt, led the way, *Moſchopulus, Chryſoloras, Laſcaris, Theodore Gaza*; then in *Italy, Laurentius Valla*; in *England, Thomas Linacer*; in *France, Cæſar Scaliger*; in *Spain, Sanctius*; in the low Countries *Voſſius*; and laſtly, thoſe able Writers *Meſſ. de Port Roial*, who ſeem to have collected the rational part out of all the reſt.

But we are now to inquire after *another* ſpecies of Criticiſm. All antient books having

having been preſerved by tranſcription, were liable thro' ignorance, negligence, or fraud, to be corrupted in three different ways, that is to ſay, by retrenchings, by additions, and by alterations.

To remedy thoſe evils, a third ſort of *Criticiſm* aroſe, and that was CRITICISM CORRECTIVE. The buſineſs of this at firſt was painfully to collate all the various copies of authority, and then, from amidſt the variety of readings thus collected, to eſtabliſh by good reaſons either the true, or the moſt probable. In this ſenſe we may call ſuch Criticiſm not only CORRECTIVE, but AUTHORITATIVE.

As the number of theſe corruptions muſt needs have increaſed by length of time, hence it has happened that *corrective Criticiſm* has become much more neceſſary in theſe latter ages, than it was in others more antient. Not but that even in antient days, *various readings* have been noted. Of this kind there are a multitude in the Text of *Homer*, a fact not to be admired, when we conſider his great antiquity. In the Comments of *Ammonius*

monius and *Philoponus* upon *Ariſtotle*, there is mention made of ſeveral in the text of that Philoſopher, which theſe his Commentators compare and examine. But ſince the revival of Literature, *to correct* has been a buſineſs of much more latitude, having continually employed for two centuries and a half both the Pains of the moſt laborious, and the Wits of the moſt acute. Many of the learned men before enumerated were not only famous as *hiſtorical* Critics, but as *corrective* alſo. To theſe may be added the two *Scaligers*, the two *Cauſabons*, *Salmaſius*, the *Heinſii*, *Grævius*, the *Grenovii*, *Burman*, *Kuſter*, *Waſſe*, *Bentley*, *Pearce*, and *Markland*. Not that theſe never meddled with the *explanatory* Criticiſm, but their principal object appears to have been the *corrective*.

But here was the misfortune of this laſt race of Critics. There were numerous corruptions in many of the beſt authors, which neither antient editions, nor manuſcripts could heal. What then was to be done?——Were Forms ſo fair to remain disfigured, and be ſeen for ever under

ſuch apparent blemiſhes?—" No, (ſays the Critic) " CONJECTURE can cure all " —*Conjecture*, whoſe performances are " for the moſt part more certain, than " any thing, that we can exhibit from the " authority of old Manuſcripts *."——— We will not aſk, upon this wonderful, aſſertion, *how if ſo certain, can it be called Conjecture?* —'Tis enough to obſerve (be it called as it will) that this ſpirit of *Conjecture* has proved a kind of *critical Quackery*, which like Quackery of other kinds, whatever it may have boaſted, has done more miſchief by far than good. Authors have been taken in hand, like anatomical ſubjects, only to diſplay the ſkill and abilities of the Artiſt; ſo that the end of many an edition ſeems often to have been no more, than to exhibit the great ſagacity and polymathy of an editor. The Joy of the taſk was the Honour of mending, while Corruptions were ſought with a more than common attention, as each of them afforded a teſtimony to the Editor and his Art.

And

* *See Dr.* Bentley's *Preface to* Horace.

And here I beg leave, by way of digreſſion, to relate a ſhort ſtory concerning a noted empiric. Being once in a ball-room crowded with company, he was aſked by a gentleman, *what he thought of ſuch a lady? was it not pity that ſhe ſquinted?*——*Squint! Sir!* replied the doctor, *I wiſh every lady in the room ſquinted; there's not a man in the univerſe can cure ſquinting but myſelf.*

But to return to our ſubject—Well indeed would it be for the cauſe of letters, were this bold conjectural ſpirit confined to works of *ſecond* rate, where let it change, expunge, or add as it pleaſe, it may be tolerably ſure to leave matters as it found them; or if not much better, at leaſt not much worſe. But when the divine geniuſes of higher rank, whom we not only applaud, but in a manner revere, when theſe come to be attempted by petulant correctors, and to be made the ſubject of their wanton caprice, how can we but exclaim with a kind of religious abhorrence,

——*procul! O! procul eſte profani!*

It would have become Dr. *Bentley*, though in literature and natural abilities among the firſt of his age, had he been more temperate in his Criticiſm upon *the Paradiſe loſt*; had he not ſo repeatedly and injuriouſly offered violence to his author, from an affected ſuperiority, to which he had no pretence. But when meaner critics preſume to be thus inſolent, 'tis enough to make the Genius of each author ariſe, and accoſt them, as *Marius* did the ſervile *Cimbrian* — *And doſt thou, ſlave, dare to demoliſh* SHAKESPEAR? — *Doſt thou, wretch, preſume to murder* MILTON? —— 'Twere only to be wiſhed, to complete the alluſion, that the correctors could have been ſcared, as effectually as the executioner; ſo that as *he* dropt his weapon, *theſe* might have dropt their pens, and the art of Criticiſm, *from their abuſe*, not have been brought into contempt.

For my own part, if I might be permitted to adviſe an adventurous race (thoſe I mean who ſcribble for pay upon every kind of ſubject) I would have them treat

even

even living authors, their equals, with reſpect. 'Twould certainly upon the whole be found to be their intereſt;

——— *haberent*
Plus dapis, & rixæ multo minus invidiæque.

But whenever they preſume to meddle with the ſacred dead, the ſublimer wits of ages paſt, let them affect (however aukwardly) the appearance at leaſt of modeſty; and if they find (which is not unlikely) the ſpirit of pertneſs about to riſe, let them admoniſh their little heart, as the Frog did his little mother,

——*Non ſi te ruperis, inquam,*
Par eris. ———

'Tis indeed hard to conceive any thing make a more contemptible figure, than an impertinent commentator in company with a good author; when in ſome ſplendid volume, gilt and letter'd, we view them together, making their public appearance. 'Tis the Conſul and the Slave, riding to-

gether in the triumphal car; a motley ſcene of ſerious and ludicrous; a kind of Tragi-comedy which diſtracts our affections, and moves us at the ſame inſtant both to gravity and mirth.

And now to avoid a ſophiſtical cenſure, (as if I were an enemy *to the thing*, from being an enemy to *its abuſe*) I would have it remember'd, 'tis not either with *Criticiſm* or *Critics*, that I preſume to find fault. The art, and its genuine profeſſors I truly honour, and think, that were it not for the acute and learned labours of a *Kuſter*, a *Waſſe*, a *Burman*, and their fellows, we ſhould bid fair to degenerate into an age of dunces. 'Tis in particular to the abilities of the three above-mentioned, (ſince I have happened to name them) that we owe correct and beautiful editions of *Ovid* and *Quintilian*; of *Salluſt* and *Thucydides*; of *Ariſtophanes*, and that treaſure of antient literature, *Suidas* *.

'Tis

* To the critics above-mentioned, I muſt add two valuable friends of my own (not before omitted, becauſe forgotten) *Dr.* TAYLOR *Chancellor of Lincoln*,

'Tis not ſuch critics (I name them again, *Waſſe*, *Kuſter*, *Burman*, and their fellows) 'tis not ſuch as theſe, that I preſume to contemn. Nay I go farther—I think the man, that can deride ſuch ſcholars as theſe, if he ſpeak as he believes, muſt be but a poor ſcholar himſelf; but if he be conſcious of his calumny, I think him ſome thing worſe. This is not want of ſcholarſhip, or inexperience in ſound literature;

——— *Hic eſt nigræ ſuccus loliginis,*
hæc eſt
Ærugo mera.

In ſhort, *learned* critics, whatever we may think of them, are a ſort of maſters of the ceremony in the court of letters, thro' whoſe aſſiſtance we are introduced into

 ſome

Lincoln, and *Mr.* UPTON *Prebendary of Rocheſter*; whoſe critical merit, in their excellent editions of *Demoſthenes* and *Epictetus*, has juſtly rendred them ornaments of their country, and will tranſmit their names with honour to poſterity.

His ſaltem accumulem donis, & fungar inani
Munere ———

ſome of the beſt of company. Should we ever therefore, by any idle prejudices againſt pedantry, verbal accuracies, and we know not what, come to ſlight their art, and reject them from our favour, 'tis well we do not ſlight alſo thoſe authors, with whom Criticiſm converſes, becoming content to read them in crude tranſlations, or (what is ſtill worſe) in tranſlations of tranſlations, where hardly a lineament or feature of the original is to be ſeen. And I will be bold to aſſert, that whenever that day comes, not the moſt admired performances of the preſent age, however highly their authors and their friends may eſteem them, will be able to ſave us from barbarity, and the dominion of dulneſs.

And ſo much at preſent for *learned* critics and editors, (of ſuch only I ſpeak) whom I ſhould be ſorry to ſee paſs into contempt, either from the ignorance of low pretenders, the wiles of ſophiſtry, the bold confidence of ſcurrility, or even the charms of wit and poetry, if ever gifts ſo divine ſhould be ſo baſely proſtituted. So much alſo for the origin and progreſs of CRITICISM,

CRITICISM, which we have divided into three ſpecies, the PHILOSOPHICAL, the HISTORICAL, and the CORRECTIVE; the philoſophical *treating of the principles, and primary cauſes of good writing*; the hiſtorical *being converſant in facts, cuſtoms, phraſes*, &c. and the corrective being divided into the AUTHORITATIVE and the CONJECTURAL; the authoritative *depending on the collation of manuſcripts and the beſt editions*; the conjectural *on the ſagacity and polymathy of editors.*

BRITISH
4 OC 71
MUSEUM

Knowlege of the World,

OR

GOOD COMPANY.

A

DIALOGUE.

Eſt genus hominum, qui eſſe primos ſe omnium rerum volunt,
Nec ſunt —— Ter.

A DIALOGUE.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Knowlege of the World,

OR

GOOD COMPANY.

A

DIALOGUE.

The ſcene and perſons, two friends walking in the *Mall*.

A. WHAT ſtrange man, I beſeech you, is this? the man I mean, that has juſt quitted us; who has been talking ſo inceſſantly, the whole time of our walk, about his intimacys and friendſhips with men of quality and birth?

B. If you inquire after his own birth, he's of the meaneſt; nothing better than the ſon of a low tradeſman.

A. Then his learning and taſte (I ſuppoſe) have recommmended him. There was

was much interperſed about his travels in *Italy*.

B. His taſte I can aſſure you is ſmall; and his learning, none.

A. You ſurprize me; ſome merit he muſt certainly have had: what has it been?

B. That which is of all merits the moſt valuable. No man living has a more exquiſite *Knowlege of the World*.

A. An exquiſite knowlege indeed! 'Tis impoſſible, if this be true, he ſhould be ſo illiterate, as you have repreſented.

B. Why not?

A. Becauſe, whether he maintain a ſyſtem of his own, or eſpouſe a ſyſtem already invented, 'tis impoſſible to do either without a variety of ſciences; there muſt be ſome phyſics, ſome metaphyſics, and previous to theſe dialectic and geometry. Add to this, if he be really what you deſcribe, he muſt not have contented himſelf with modern philoſophers only; he muſt have examined and well weighed the ſeveral ſentiments of antiquity; the watry principle of *Thales*; the fiery one of *Heraclitus*;

raclitus; the ideas of *Plato*; the matter, form and privation of the *Stagirite*.

B. My good friend, what are you talking about?

A. I ſay, that all this cannot be done *without learning*, and much learning too.

B. And what then?

A. What then? why if this man have ſuch a *Knowlege of the World*, as you affirm, he muſt neceſſarily have all, or moſt of the learning juſt mentioned.

B. Not at all; I dare ſay he never heard a ſyllable of this in all his life. By an exquiſite *Knowlege of the World* I mean, he has an exquiſite *Knowlege of Men*.

A. O! O! I beg your pardon.—He is an adept then in *ethics*, a great moraliſt, 'tis that's the caſe.

B. I can't ſay much as to his morals; but he certainly knows *human nature* to the greateſt exactneſs.

A. Then I am certain he muſt be *a moraliſt*, and a very good man.

B. But an indifferent one truly—a ſycophant, a ſlanderer, a ſpendthrift, a debauchée —— *A.*

A. Hold, hold! meer calumny! this cannot but be impoſſible. The man, ſo knowing in human nature, cannot but have ſtudied himſelf. The man, who has ſtudied himſelf, cannot but have ſeen the deformity of theſe vicious characters; and if he has once beheld that, he could no more indure to bear the characters, than he could to bear the ſpots of a fever or a plague.

B. O! my friend, you ſtill miſapprehend me. By the *Knowlege of mankind* I mean not your *ethic* ſcience; my meaning is, that he knows *who are good Company*, and how the moſt effectually to ingratiate himſelf with them.

A. Nay then I'm ſure, I may affirm him more than ever to be *good*.

B. You ſurprize me: why?

A. Are you at a loſs for a reaſon? can any thing poſſibly ingratiate a man with good men, except it be *goodneſs*?

B. I muſt anſwer your queſtion by another; which is, what 'tis you take *good Company* to be?

A.

A. I know the conſequence, ſhould I attempt to explain myſelf. I ſhall be either ſeriouſly condemned, or laugh'd at with contempt for an idle ſophiſt, and refiner upon words.

B. And are you a philoſopher and afraid of that?

A. I never aſpired to ſo high a character — But let this paſs — you have aſked me my ſentiments upon *good Company*. Does it not ſeem firſt proper to inquire what *Company* means in general? Is not this the more natural method to know the ſpecies inquired after?

B. I can't tell but it may.

A. When therefore we ſay a *Company* of any kind whatever, does it not always ſuggeſt the ſame general idea, *of many perſons conſidered collectively?*

B. As how?

A. Thus: many artiſts conſidered collectively make *a company* in trade; many ſoldiers, *a company* in war; the ſame of comedians, of gypſies, or of any thing. Is not this true?

B. I believe it may.

A.

A. If ſo, when we ſay *good Company*, this likewiſe muſt mean *many perſons conſidered collectively.*

B. I admit it.

A. And as the peculiar characteriſtic of ſuch *Company* is to be *good*, it muſt neceſſarily mean farther *many perſons that are good.* Muſt it not?

B. Poſſibly it may.

A. Now as goodneſs in *many* muſt be the ſame as goodneſs in *one*, if we can but diſcover what makes one man good, we diſcover of courſe what makes a number, or *Company.* Is not this evident?

B. According to your ſcheme it may.

A. What then is it conſtitutes each particular man to be good? It cannot be riches; for that would make a good man of every ſordid uſurer.

B. I freely give up the rich.

A. Nor can it be dignity and rank; for that would make good men of the *Neros* and *Domitians.* ———Do you doubt of this?

B. I have not yet diſſented—— let me hear how you proceed.

A.

A. Nor can it be birth and high deſcent; for then ———

B. Hold, hold! I ſee at what you are driving. You would bring me to confeſs, becauſe theſe things make not a good *Man*, that therefore they make not good *Company*. As for riches I freely grant them to be an ingredient not neceſſary. But I ſhall never be brought to believe, by the ſtrength of a little logic, that *good Company* is not formed by people of faſhion, and of birth.

A. That is as much as to ſay, you are firmly reſolved to believe, that tho' they are ever ſo *bad Company*, they are ſtill *good Company*.

B. Well, well, you may ridicule as you pleaſe. I ſhan't ſo tamely renounce my opinion.

A. To give you then a ſample of my complaiſance, I admit all people of faſhion to be *good Company*, and none elſe whatever. Do you only, on your part, as I have been ſo generous, make me a ſmall conceſſion or two by way of return.

B. What is it you require?

A. In the firſt place grant me, that they poſſeſs not (at leaſt all of them) the ſame exalted underſtandings, as *Socrates* or *Plato*.

B. With all my heart.

A. Nor yet the ſame conſummate virtue.

B. Moſt willingly.

A. There are it ſeems then among theſe, as among others, the ignorant and vitious, as well as the wiſe and good.

B. There are.

A. And yet if a man aſſociate with this vitious and ignorant part, he keeps *good Company* nevertheleſs.

B. He does.

A. Suppoſe then a perſon of profligate character, by the help of adulation and a ſcurrilous kind of drollery, to render himſelf acceptable to this baſer part of *good Company*, and wholly to paſs his time with theſe alone: ſuch we know to be the caſe of many a parafite, many a buffoon.

B. It is, and what follows?

A. Do you not perceive the paradoxes, which follow?

B. What paradoxes?

A. One, that a man may be countenanc'd by *good Company* all his life, and

not poſſeſs the leaſt particle of good to recommend him. Another, that a man may keep *good Company* all his life, and hardly converſe with a ſingle perſon of either virtue or underſtanding. Are not theſe paradoxes?—Again, by inverſion we may create ſtill more of them.—One, for inſtance, that a man may have much virtue and underſtanding, and converſe perpetually with perſons of the ſame character, and yet in the courſe of a long life never keep the leaſt *good Company* — Another, that as there are perſons of virtue and underſtanding, who are no *good Company*, and *good Company* who have neither virtue nor underſtanding, there will be ſome *bad Company* more good than ſome *good Company*: what think you of theſe things? Are not theſe all paradoxes, which follow from what you have aſſerted?

B. Very fine, truly! —— And ſo you really imagine that by a few trifling queſtions, and a little ſophiſtical cavilling upon words, you have gained over your friend a complete logical triumph.

A. How well not long ago did I foretell my own fate? Did not I ſay that I

ſhould be arraigned for an idle ſophiſt, a minute refiner upon verbal niceties?

B. And do you not juſtly deſerve the character? Is the whole, you have been ſaying, at beſt any thing more, than a contradiction to the common language of all mankind?

A. I never heard before that all mankind had a common language.

B. Why there again?—As if by mankind, I meant every human creature, now exiſting in the world.—

A. Exiſting in the world?—In what world?

B. Nay this is worſe than ever—I am ſure, if I had not more philoſophy to bear being thus queſtioned, than you on your part have ſhewn in queſtioning, I ſhould long ago not have vouchſafed you an anſwer.

A. Have patience then, my friend, and let your philoſophy ſtill ſupport you. Renounce her not, as is too often the caſe, at that critical moment, when ſhe is moſt to be deſired. The meaneſt may philoſophize with the greateſt apparent wiſdom, while the courſe of human events is even and unruffled: juſt as with a fair gale, in the great pacific Ocean—

B.

B. Well, well, don't preach over me, but propoſe your queſtion.

A. With all my heart. I was aſking you, when you talked of *every human creature in the world*, what you meant by the word, *World.*

B. And what do you ſeriouſly think 'twas poſſible for me to mean, but *this Earth* of ours?

A. What, the terraqueous Globe?

B. Ay, the terraqueous Globe, if you like that better.

A. 'Tis enough, I am ſatisfied. I ſee light now diffuſe itſelf thro' all our dark debate. If this be the meaning of the word, World, *to know the World* muſt mean, to know this terraqueous Globe. Muſt it not?

B. In ſome ſenſe poſſibly it may.

A. 'Tis no hard matter then, admitting this explication, to diſcover whom you mean by thoſe, that know it. They are the great geometricians, and geographers, and voyagers; the *Strabos*, the *Ptolemies*, the *Forbiſhers*, and the *Drakes*. One alſo of the ſame catalogue 'tis to be preſumed we may call your friend; I mean, that marvelous man, who left us not long

ago, and whoſe knowlege in this way you extolled ſo highly.

B. My friend, as you call him (I thank you for the compliment) knows nothing of theſe matters, I can aſſure you, in the leaſt; nor did I, for my part, ever mean any thing like it. In ſhort, to end all trifling at once, (for I have quite enough) by *Knowlege of Men and the World*, I mean nothing more, than according to common phraſe, *the knowing every body in town.*

A. In what town.

B. In this town, in *London.*

A. Indeed! what, every body in *London?*

B. Fie! fie! more cavilling.—Every body, I mean, of birth and faſhion.

A. About two or three thouſand perhaps: will that be enough?

B. I don't imagine they can be ſo many.

A. A three or four hundredth part this of about eight hundred thouſand, the ſuppoſed number, which inhabit this city.

B. It may be ſo poſſiby; I never made the computation.

A. To be acquainted therefore with this three or four hundredth part, is what you mean by *knowing of the World.*

B.

B. I allow it.

A. And in this ſmall pittance of the whole human race, you grant the ſame mixture of virtue and of vice, as may be found at large among mankind in general.

B. I do.

A. So that by force of any eſſential and truly characteriſtic quality, they are no way to be diſtinguiſhed from the ordinary herd.

B. By no virtue or vice I have told you already.

A. Theſe then are in reality your ſentiments, and meaning.

B. They are, you may be aſſured.

A. And you aſſure me farther, that in no part of your diſcourſe, you at any time intended *by knowlege of the World*, a knowlege of that comprehenſive and ſtupendous ſyſtem, in which are included all ſyſtems ſubordinate; all beings whatever, both rational and irrational, both immeaſurably great and immeaſurably ſmall.

B. No, that I can ſafely aſſure you.

A. Nor did you ever mean by the *World* any one of theſe ſubordinate ſyſtems; as for inſtance the ſolar.

B. I never did.

A. Nor any orb or planet of ſuch ſyſtem; as for inſtance this Globe of ours.

B. No.

A. Nor any quarter of this Globe, as *Aſia* or *Europe*.

B. No.

A. Nor any region of ſuch quarter, as *Italy* or *Britain*.

B. No.

A. Nor any whole city of ſuch region, as *Rome* or *London*.

B. No.

A. On the contrary, *to know the World*, according to this hypotheſis of yours, is "to know a little clan compoſed of both "ſexes, in character upon a level with the "reſt of mankind, and like them equally "diverſified with good and bad; a clan, "the ſmall part of a ſingle city, of a ſingle "region, of the ſmalleſt quarter, of a ſmall "planet, of a ſingle ſyſtem, in that infinite "and unknown number of ſyſtems, which "together compoſe this mighty UNIVERSE "or WORLD."—Such you muſt allow, is the Knowlege, that you have praiſed; a Knowlege, the merit of which you made ſo important, as to ſupply the place of every merit elſe; the merit of taſte; the merit

of

of letters; and I fear, even the merit of morality itſelf.——But I've done, leſt you ſhould think I am growing too ſerious.

B. You have not the leaſt occaſion for apologizing to me. Only one thing, as a friend, 'ts proper I ſhould tell you. Whatever you may fancy of your proofs and your demonſtrations, I'm not to be ſo readily refuted, as you think. You imagined, I dare ſay, I ſhould have ſurrender'd by this time; have acknowledged my errors; have recognized your wiſdom; have acted with due decorum *the under hero of a modern dialogue*, that thing of wood, ſet up for nothing elſe, than for another to ſhew his ſkill, by tipping of him down. But this, you may be ſatisfied, will never happen on my part.

A. Indeed, indeed, you are totally miſtaken. You may be well aſſured, that I never expected it. Diſcourſes of all kinds, I ſee by daily experience, are but feeble remedies to correct opinions. I could only wiſh you would correct your *phraſe*, and not affront your mother-tongue with ſuch horrible abuſe.

B. What abuſe do you mean?

A.

A. The abſolute confuſion of all terms; the making of great ſtand for little; ſtrait for crooked; laudable and fair, for contemptible and baſe. Is not this abuſe?

B. Not of my committing that I know of. I know none of my phraſes not juſtified by common uſe. That the phraſes, *Knowlege of Mankind* and *Knowlege of the World* are ſo, is, I believe, paſt diſpute.—And now, if you pleaſe, let me invert matters, and aſk a queſtion on my part. Pray what authority have you, ſuperior to common uſe, to annex to theſe terms any ideas of your own?

A. Should I attempt to anſwer this, I ſhould not give you my own ſentiments, but the ſentiments of men, who lived in days of old; of men, whoſe wiſdom I admire and revere. The conſequences therefore alarm me. 'Twould grieve me to expoſe ſuch excellent men, ſhould I prove a bad interpreter of what they had aſſerted.

B. I perceive your aim; you would willingly excuſe yourſelf. But I can aſſure you, I ſhall not be ſo eaſily ſatisfied.--What? have not I equal right to hear and ſcrutinize your opinions, as you have mine?

A.

A. Well then, if you muſt be obeyed, I only beg one favour.—If what I ſay, appear true, be the praiſe theirs; if falſe and abſurd, impute the fault to me.

B. You have your own conditions. Proceed, as you pleaſe.

A. Thus therefore—"To KNOW MANKIND AND HUMAN NATURE, as wiſe men have ſaid, is to know the ſeveral powers of human action and perception; the perceptive powers, whether ſenſitive or intellective; the manner, in which theſe two coincide, and reciprocally paſs from one to the other; the active powers of appetite and averſion; their concurring with reaſon, as well as their quitting, and oppoſing it; the various affections, whether ſelfiſh or ſocial; the ſource of wrong action from either the exorbitance of appetite, or from reaſon erroneouſly judging evil to be good; the gradual deviation, by theſe two cauſes, from the true and natural end of man, that is to ſay, the tranſition from what is ſocial and rational into vitious habits, and falſe opinions; the many imperceptible and unattended degrees, by which ſuch habits

" habits and opinions are formed; the ſlow
" and critical proceſs of raiſing up better,
" by which alone thoſe others are to be de-
" ſtroyed. This, as I have heard, is *to*
" *know human nature*; a Knowlege, which
" aſſumes as many different denominations,
" as 'tis capable of being attached to differ-
" ent ſubjects: applied to a man's ſelf, 'tis
" called the virtue of *prudence*; to a family,
" it aſſumes the name of *oeconomy*; when
" ſeen in the propriety of our common in-
" tercourſe with others, 'tis recognized by
" the name of *civility* and *addreſs*; when
" extended to the leading of ſtates and em-
" pires, 'tis the *rhetoric* and *policy of the*
" *genuine ſtateſman*; in a word, 'tis a Know-
" lege which differs in this from all others,
" that by poſſeſſing it we become not only
" wiſer but better. And ſo much for *the*
" *Knowlege of men*, and *human nature*.

" Again, TO KNOW THE WORLD, what
" is it in the opinion of the ſame wiſe men?
" —'Tis what they have called by way of
" eminence, the ſcience of ſciences, and art
" of arts, as including the principles of
" every other Knowlege. 'Tis to have a
" Knowlege of *Form* or ſeminal propor-
" tion,

" ſion, with the univerſal *Subject*, its paſſive
" receptacle. 'Tis to view, in the union of
" theſe together, the birth of things by
" kinds, and ſpecies. 'Tis to ſee the effi-
" cacy of theſe kinds, and ſpecies; how
" nature from their *connection* derives *the*
" *unity of her exiſtence*, and from their *va-*
" *riety* and *arrangement*, becomes *adorned*
" thro' every part. 'Tis to gain a glimpſe
" of that *active Intelligence*, the repoſitory
" of all *final* cauſes, and the firſt mover of
" all *efficient*. 'Tis to poſſeſs the ſource
" of the ſublimeſt *theory*, as *to know man-*
" *kind* in the manner deſcribed, is to poſ-
" ſeſs the ſource of the moſt excellent
" *practice*. In ſhort, 'tis the union of theſe
" two ſciences, (call the one *wiſdom*, the
" other moral *virtue*,) which completes
" the juſt exemplar of perfect humanity;
" that conſummate idea, which but to
" reſemble and approach is the higheſt
" proficiency of the beſt of men."

What then are we to conclude, when we find all this inverted? when we hear theſe tranſcendant accompliſhments ſo wretchedly degraded, as to be attributed not to the worthieſt, but to the baſeſt

and very worſt? when we are told that ſpendthrifts, ſycophants, I know not whom, may poſſeſs an exact Knowlege both of *human nature* and *the World*? —— Is not this to be guilty of the confuſion I ſpoke of; to invert all terms; to make great ſtand for little; ſtrait for crooked; laudable and fair, for contemptible and baſe?

O! my friend! let us not appeal to cuſtom to juſtify ſuch contradictions. Tho' cuſtom in things indifferent may be ſometimes perhaps admitted, yet never for its ſake let us renounce truth, and common ſenſe. Why ſhould there not be an accuracy, as well in ſpeaking, as elſewhere? Why ſhould † our words, by our fooliſh hyperboles, ſo immenſely outrun the poſſibility of a meaning? —— In praiſe, and diſpraiſe, in characterizing, and complaiſance, all we ſay is little better, than a continued lie. —— At a moment's warning, as occaſion requires, we can be *extremely ſorry*, or *exceſſively bad*, without feeling the leaſt emotion either of grief, or joy.

If

† Jam pridem equidem nos vera rerum vocabula amiſimus. *Cato in Bell. Catilin.* pag. 127. Edit. *Var.*

If we barely like a thing, 'tis *charming*, and *prodigious*; if we barely diſlike, 'tis *horrible*, and *ſhocking*. — And upon what in the mean time are we diſcourſing? Perhaps on nothing more important, than ſongs, and ſilks, and fans, and fidlers. Had it been aſked an old *Roman*, what he reckoned *an honour*, he would have anſwered a civic, or a mural crown. Now truly to receive a common letter, is *an honour*; to anſwer it is *another honour*; and to aſſure a man, *how much we are his devoted humble ſervants*, when we never in our lives either ſerv'd him, or intend it, this too is *another honour*.

O times! O manners! how had theſe things ſounded in the days of *Attic* eloquence? what would old *Homer* have thought, in the days of antient ſimplicity? We may partly indeed conjecture, from a ſentiment of his principal hero.——

To me as hateful, as the gates of hell,
Is he, that one thing in his heart conceals,
And ſpeaks another———

But to deſcend from theſe heroic ages to others leſs remote. Mark but the exactneſs,

actneſs, as to *terms of art*, among our own mechanics, and ſailors, and ſportſmen. What hunters would be bribed, think you, to talk of *courſing with their hounds*; of *rouſing* a fox; or of *unkenelling* a deer?—Yet it behoves not theſe either to write, or to read, but nature ſeems to lead them ſpontaneouſly to be thus accurate. So would ſhe lead us, did we not oppoſe her by affectation, and by aping of that ſtyle, as elegant and polite, which only befits the low-cringing, and adulation of ſlaves.

But I have talked enough, and indeed more than I ought. 'Twas the ſubject itſelf, which at firſt engaged me, and then inſenſibly led me beyond what I propoſed.

B. You have ſaid, in my opinion, what deſerves to be conſidered. At another time we may revive the ſubject, and diſcourſe at leiſure theſe things over again.

The E N D.

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